

# Legislature 2005 • 5<sup>th</sup> District Report



## Representative Glenn Anderson

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### Committees:

Appropriations;  
Education; Rules

### Internet page:

[http://hrc.leg.wa.gov/  
members/anderson.htm](http://hrc.leg.wa.gov/members/anderson.htm)

## Representative Jay Rodne

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### Committees:

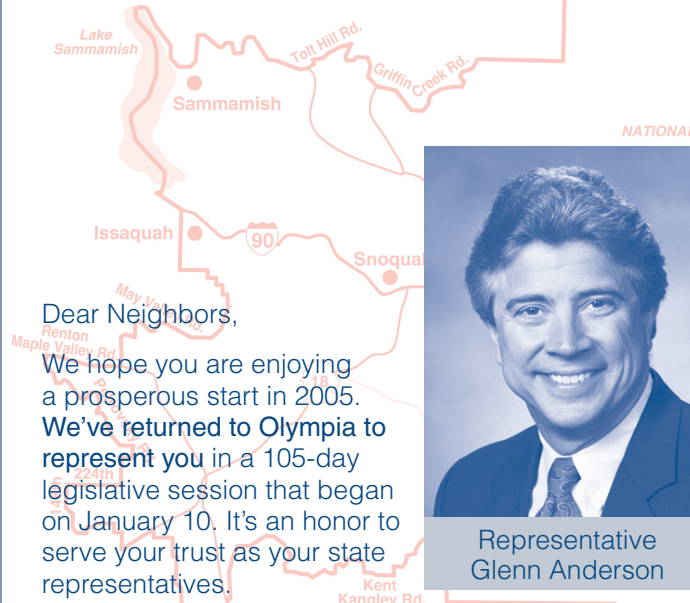
Higher Education; Juvenile  
Justice and Family Law;  
Transportation

### Internet page:

[http://hrc.leg.wa.gov/  
members/rodne.htm](http://hrc.leg.wa.gov/members/rodne.htm)

1-800-562-6000  
(Legislative Hotline)  
1-800-635-9993  
(Legislative Hotline for the  
hearing-impaired)

## To the residents of the 5<sup>th</sup> District



Dear Neighbors,

We hope you are enjoying a prosperous start in 2005. We've returned to Olympia to represent you in a 105-day legislative session that began on January 10. It's an honor to serve your trust as your state representatives.



Representative  
Glenn Anderson



Representative  
Jay Rodne

After the 2004 election, the Olympia scorecard looks like this: Democrats control the Governor's Office, hold a slim three-seat majority (26-23) in the state Senate and a commanding 12-seat majority (55-43) in the state House. This undisputed majority provides Democrats with an unrestricted opportunity to enact their political agenda for our state.

The most important issue we'll face this year is balancing the state's budget. This important task needs to be handled in a responsible and sustainable way. This year's anticipated budget deficit is around \$1.6 billion. Since 1998, our state has experienced more than \$7 billion in ongoing budget deficits. These deficits have undermined the health of our state's economy, and prevented new investments in schools and colleges, and reforms to our health care system.

We are eager to work in a bipartisan manner with the Democrat majority in Olympia on real solutions to the many challenging issues facing our state. Equally, we won't be shy about pointing out "window dressing" legislation that sounds good, but fixes nothing or benefits narrow special interest groups at the expense of us all.

We want you to be involved in these important decisions. In this newsletter, we ask that you complete a short survey of your priorities and provide us your e-mail address so we can send you brief periodic legislative updates.

It's your government. We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Rep. Glenn Anderson

Rep. Jay Rodne

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## Addressing “the deficit trap”

Every family that has fallen behind on paying the monthly bills to support their lifestyle knows that eventually something has to give. Either they must make more money or go without until they catch up with the payments. When families are able to get ahead of the bills, then they can save to invest in their futures.

State government budgeting is no different. Outgoing Gov. Locke has recommended significantly raising taxes in an attempt to plug our state's budget hole. Democrat leadership of the state Senate and House also support significant tax increases. **We hope that Gov. Gregoire keeps her campaign promise not to raise taxes.** Additionally, voters clearly said “no new taxes” when voting on ballot initiatives last November.

We know it's not only possible, but essential, that the Legislature and governor balance the next two-year budget without raising general-fund taxes. **Rather than raising taxes, we should support initiatives that get our economy going, which will generate the funds we need to balance the budget and provide needed services.** Our state's economy is still fragile and we believe this is the worst time to increase the tax burden on families and employers.



## Visit our Capitol Building

The Nisqually Earthquake of 2001 took its toll on our historic Capitol Building in Olympia. Following that event, the building required extensive renovation and retrofitting.

Our Capitol Building is now open to the public again and as beautiful as ever. **We encourage you to come down and visit our special and historic building.** Please contact us if you plan on coming down sometime. Or, visit: <http://www.ga.wa.gov/visitor/index.html>

## State budget update

Our state is facing an estimated \$1.6 billion operating budget deficit. The biggest drivers impacting next year's budget will be:

- State government employee salary and pension increases
- Unfunded government employee pension contributions
- Increasing K–12 education costs
- Higher university and college enrollment levels and operating costs
- Health care coverage for low-income and disabled citizens
- Interest costs on the state's current debt

**Rep. Rodne takes notes in a House Transportation Committee meeting.**

## Resources on the Internet

Want to find out which bills affect you this year? Need general information about state government or local services, or want help starting a business? Here are some Internet sites to assist you:

- **Access.wa.gov** – Here you can access state agencies, apply for unemployment benefits, renew your car tabs, and much more.
- **Leg.wa.gov** – Want to testify for or against a bill? Here you'll find committee meeting schedules and nearly everything else you want to know about the Legislature.
- **ATG.wa.gov/consumer** – Consumer protection from Washington's Attorney General, also at 1-800-551-4636.
- **Insurance.wa.gov/oic/contact.asp** – Consumer protection from Washington's Insurance Commissioner on insurance-related issues, also at 1-800-562-6900.
- **SBA.gov** and **WSBDC.org** – Need help starting or operating a small business? You'll find it here.
- **EDVP.org** – Eastside Domestic Violence Program, also at 1-800-827-8840.

## Efficiency in state government

The State Auditor's Office regularly audits state agencies' finances. These fiscal audits focus on accounting and statutory compliance. While these audits remain important, so are performance audits—which focus on the operational effectiveness and efficiency of state agencies and their programs.

Performance audits should not only look at how efficient agencies are performing—they should also study whether government agencies should be performing certain tasks at all. For example, in some instances the private sector could do things more cost-effectively. **It's important state government is run with efficiency so that your tax dollars are spent effectively.**

## Funding K-12 public education

Our K-12 public schools are funded through a mix of state funds, federal funds and local taxes that are distributed through various programs. Local school districts then apply those funds in their communities subject to parent priorities, state achievement standards and collective bargaining with teacher and staff unions. **Nearly half of the state's general fund budget is dedicated to paying for our kids' K-12 public education.**

A bipartisan House workgroup, that included Rep. Anderson, studied the foundation and effectiveness of our state's K-12 education finance structure last year—including how funding is aligned with state education goals.

The workgroup concluded **the state's funding system has a strong foundation and can meet the demands of the state's new rigorous academic standards for students.** However, it also found that specific areas merit structural reforms, including teacher's compensation, transportation funding, local levy lids, the Learning Assistance Program (remedial education for low-income students) and funding for special education students.

To learn more about information presented to this workgroup, please visit: <http://www.leg.wa.gov/house/opr/K12Finance/reports.htm>

## Easing traffic congestion

**Traffic congestion remains a problem on certain roadways in our district, especially on State Routes 169, 202, 900, and the I-90/Highway 18 interchange.**

Last September, the state Department of Transportation, in cooperation with local governments and other groups, began an 18-month study of **ways to improve traffic flow and safety on SR 169.** At the end of that study we will receive a list of suggested improvements that might include new turn lanes and signals, improved shoulders, and widened roadways. Last year, we secured \$550,000 in funding to take the first step.

**Another project important to our district involves SR 202, SR 520 and Sahalee Way.** This will add an additional lane each way on SR 202 between SR 520 and Sahalee Way. The project is being constructed in two stages. Construction of the first stage, from SR 520 to East Lake Sammamish Parkway, began in November and should be complete by the end of this year.

The second stage, from East Lake Sammamish Parkway to Sahalee Way, will start in Spring 2005 and be completed in Fall 2007. The project will also include **improved signals, sidewalks, drainage, bike lanes, turn lanes and landscaped medians.**

**We will continue to work with our partners at the state and local levels to ease congestion and make our roadways safer.**

## Making health care more accessible

Washingtonians want health insurance plans that are flexible, affordable and tailored to the needs of families. We used to have more than 20 health insurance companies from which to choose. Today, there are only a handful. They have left the state because **Washington places more mandates on health insurance companies than just about any other state.** Each time a state mandate (i.e., a service all policies must cover) is added, it drives costs up for all consumers—whether they want that type of coverage or not.

A vast majority of small employers would like to provide health care insurance for their employees, but costs prevent many from doing so.

**We need small group insurance reform so workers and their employers can purchase affordable plans that cover the health care services they really need.**

We also need to enact limits that will **reduce the number of frivolous medical malpractice lawsuits,** keeping down health care costs for all of us.



**Rep. Anderson speaks out on an education bill.**



# Communicating with you— E-mail legislative updates and town hall meetings

We are your voice in Olympia. It's important we listen and communicate with you so you are aware of the issues and proposed solutions that may impact our community.

If you are interested in receiving e-mail legislative updates or notification of local town hall meetings, please provide your e-mail address below.

Your e-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

Zip code: \_\_\_\_\_

What's most important to you?

Please take the time to let us know your priorities. It really does make a difference!

You can also send your thoughts to our e-mail addresses:  
Rep. Glenn Anderson at  
[Anderson.Glenn@leg.wa.gov](mailto:Anderson.Glenn@leg.wa.gov)  
and Rep. Jay Rodne at  
[Rodne.Jay@leg.wa.gov](mailto:Rodne.Jay@leg.wa.gov).

1. Our state is facing around a \$1.6 billion dollar budget deficit. What are your priorities? Tax Revenue Priorities (please pick one)

- ☐ Raise taxes
- ☐ Raise taxes, don't cut any public services
- ☐ Rely mostly on tax increases with modest cuts in public services
- ☐ Raise taxes modestly, rely mostly on cuts in services.
- ☐ Don't raise taxes, cut public services
- ☐ Cut taxes

2. What's most important to you? Program Spending Priorities (please pick your top three, ranking them if you wish)

- ☐ Creating jobs
- ☐ Public safety
- ☐ K-12 education
- ☐ Higher education
- ☐ Health care
- ☐ Social services
- ☐ Environment
- ☐ Transportation
- ☐ Election reform
- ☐ Regulatory reform
- ☐ Other (please specify: \_\_\_\_\_)

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